

Judy Miller – See transcript from 3/9/11 oral testimony

GOOD EVENING PLANNING COMMISSION, CITY
STAFF AND THE CITIZENS IN THE CITY OF
ROCKVILLE.

IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I HAVE COME
IN FRONT OF YOU TO PROVIDE TESTIMONY FOR
THE TWINBROOK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AND
TONIGHTS COMMENTS ARE WITH REGARDS TO
THE ROCKVILLE PIKE PLAN.

SPECIFICALLY, I AM GOING TO FOCUS ON THE
FUNDING MECHANISMS AND THE ECONOMIC
STRATEGIES AS MENTIONED IN THE PLAN.

THE RECOMMENDED FUNDING MECHANISMS TO
PAY FOR THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS
INCLUDES A THREE WAY APPROACH:

1. ENSURING THAT THE MULTI-WAY BLVD IS A
FUNDING PRIORITY FOR MONTGOMERY
COUNTY AND THE STATE OF MARYLAND.

WITH THE CURRENT STATE OF MARYLAND
AND MONTGOMERY COUNTIES BUDGET
SITUATION...GOOD LUCK WITH THIS TO DO
ITEM!

2. CREATING TAX INCREMENT FINANCING
DISTRICTS TO PROVIDE THE CITY WITH
SUBSTANTIAL BONDING CAPACITY TO
PROVIDE NEEDED PUBLIC ENHANCEMENTS

AND IMPROVEMENTS IN THE REDEVELOPMENT, SUCH AS STREETScape, PUBLIC AMENITIES AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS.

HERE WE GO AGAIN...THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE HAS NOT LEARNED ITS LESSON FROM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OF THIS NATURE.

WE MUST LOOK TO THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE ROCKVILLE TOWN CENTER - A PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WHERE WE, THE CITIZENS OF ROCKVILLE, ARE SUBSIDIZING THE PRINCIPLE AND INTEREST FOR THE THREE PARKING GARAGES EVERY YEAR FOREVER BECAUSE THE REVENUES GENERATED FROM THE PARKING GARAGES DO NOT COVER THE EXPENDITURES.

THE ROCKVILLE PIKE PLAN HAS THE SAME ASSUMPTIONS.

WE ASK THAT MR. COHEN, THE CITY'S CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, PROVIDE A DETAILED FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF WHAT THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE'S SUBSIDY IS GOING TO BE FOR THE ROCKVILLE PIKE PLAN.

HERE IS A PICTURE OF THE CONSULTANTS' "VISION" FOR THE ROCKVILLE PIKE PLAN:

MIXED USE BUILDINGS...CURB TO CURB....WITHOUT ANY RECREATION FACILITIES...WITHOUT OUR MARQUEE RETAIL SHOPPING AREAS. DO YOU SEE ANYWHERE WHERE THE BUY BUY BABY STORE, STAPLES, BED, BATH AND BEYOND, BEST BUY OR THE CONTAINER STORE ARE LOCATED IN THIS PICTURE?

I DO NOT... HOW ABOUT YOU?

THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE CAN BORROW FOR BONDS AT A RATE OF 2 to 4%.

WHY ARE WE ALLOWING THE DEVELOPERS TO USE THE CITY'S GOOD CREDIT FOR BORROWING ON BONDS TO FUND THEIR PRIVATE PROJECTS WITH THE DEVELOPERS MAKING ALL OF THE PROFITS AND THE CITIZENS CARRYING THE RISKS, INTEREST PAYMENTS, AND PRINCIPAL?

IF WE LET THE BORROWERS USE OUR GOOD CREDIT AND LOW COST OF CAPITAL TO ISSUE BONDS TO FUND THIS REDEVELOPMENT, WE CAN SAY GOODBYE TO OUR TRIPLE A BOND RATING!

THE TOTAL COST OF THIS PROJECT IS \$826 MILLION.

THE SAD PART IS THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE
DOES NOT EVEN BENEFIT FROM THE
REDEVELOPMENT OF ROCKVILLE PIKE.

WHO BENEFITS?
THE STATE OF MARYLAND AND
MONTGOMERY COUNTY!

HOW
THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE ONLY GENERATES
APPROX. \$1.5 MILLION DOLLARS IN NEW
TAXES TO REDEVELOP THE ROCKVILLE PIKE.

THE STATE OF MARYLAND GETS \$6.6 MILLION
DOLLARS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY GETS \$11.7 MILLION
DOLLARS

TOTAL NEW TAXES GENERATED IS \$19.8
MILLION

CITY OF ROCKVILLES SHARE IS ONLY 8% OF
THIS TAX "TAKE" THAT WILL FILL COFFERS IN
ANNAPOLIS BUT NOT IN ROCKVILLE...

AND BY THE WAY THE COST TO BORROW ON
\$826MILLION DOLLARS AT 4%= \$33 MILLION
ANNUALLY. ROCKVILLE'S SHARE IS \$2.6
MILLION OF INTEREST NOT INCLUDING
PAYING DOWN THE BONDS BORROWED...

LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER ROCKVILLE SUBSIDY FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY AND THE STATE OF MARYLAND AT \$1.1MILLION DOLLARS PER YEAR.(THAT IS \$2.6 MILLION INTEREST LESS \$1.5 IN NEW TAXES)

IN SUMMARY, THE ECONOMIC STRATEGIES OF THE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP DO NOT STAND UP, THE LACK OF FUNDING BY THE DEVELOPERS TO PROVIDE THE TOTAL PACKAGE OF THE BUILDING, SIDEWALKS, PARKING GARAGES, SCHOOLS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IS NOT COVERED IN THE PLAN.

THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE'S EXCELLENT BOND RATING IS AT STAKE.

WHY DO YOUR CONSULTANTS ASSUME THAT THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE IS GOING TO PROVIDE ANOTHER SUBSIDY FOR DEVELOPMENT?

WE WILL HAVE FUTURE BUDGET PROBLEMS IF WE GO AHEAD WITH THE FUNDING MECHANISMS AS PROPOSED IN THIS DRAFT PLAN.

THE ICC WAS A VISION 20 YEARS AGO AND

I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO RIDE THE ICC ROAD FROM GEORGIA AVE TO 270... IT IS A NICE ROAD – BUT IT HAS BANKRUPTED THE STATE OF MARYLAND'S TRANSPORTATION FUND.

LET'S MAKE SURE THAT THE CONSULTANTS' TUNNEL VISION FOR THE ROCKVILLE PIKE PLAN DOES NOT BREAK OUR BANK.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR LISTENING.

MY NAME IS RICHARD GOTTFRIED

Tom Doerr – See transcript from 3/9/11 oral testimony

Tim Fahey-See transcript from 3/9/2011 oral testimony.

Envision Rockville Pike

Norene Stovall

to:

rockvillepikeplan

03/10/2011 01:36 PM

Cc:

"Schack, Lorraine", "Hiton, Terri"

Show Details

The Rockville Senior Citizens' Commission wants to make you aware of a program called Friends of Rockville Seniors (FORS). This program was unanimously endorsed by the Rockville City Council in October, 2010. Since that time, we have been working with city staff, the Rockville Chamber of Commerce, the Rockville Living website, The Town Center Action Team, and Montgomery College to refine the FORS criteria and launch the program. Official announcement will come in May, Older Americans Month, with launch in October.

The FORS program is a plan for the seniors and businesses in Rockville to work together for mutual benefit. In exchange for addressing the needs of seniors in such areas as creating a friendly atmosphere and addressing needs in the areas of mobility, vision, and hearing disabilities, the business will be named a Friend of Rockville Seniors and receive a FORS logo to display. In addition, the seniors will supply a listing of these senior friendly businesses in various media including, but not limited to, newspapers and websites.

The program is not fully developed, but we expect to complete it soon. When our criteria and details are finalized, we will be pleased to update whomever you designate both in person or in writing. Our goal is to have our finalized criteria included in plans for any businesses as the envisioned Pike develops. Should you wish further information at this time, please contact me, Norene Y. Stovall, by return email, or Lorraine Schack, Supervisor of Senior Support Services at the Senior Center, at lschack@rockvillemd.gov or 240/314-8812. Thank you very much.

Norene Y. Stovall

Senior Citizen Commission Member

Comment on Rockville Pike Plan

Graboske, Frederick J

to:

rockvillepikeplan

03/14/2011 12:02 PM

Cc:

"Graboske, Trish"

Show Details

Members of the Planning Commission,

I will be unable to attend tonight's meeting, so I am using this method to communicate my concerns to you.

It is my understanding that the draft Plan creates the position of Town Architect, who would have sole authority over new development in the Rockville Pike area. I am completely opposed to that. The Planning Commission must be the final arbiter, so that citizens can make their concerns known and heard. I know from personal experience that the City's plans do not always accord with the wishes of its citizens, and I know that, when those wishes are made known, the City listens. Direct and public citizen input is essential to whatever decisions are made about new development.

Approval for new development always should be in accord with the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. As a resident of Rockville for over 30 years, I have seen traffic increase dramatically and unpleasantly, both in the center of the City and on the Pike. Whatever decisions are made about Pike development must not increase traffic congestion. I use these roads and don't want to see them any more congested than they are now. If it means limiting development, so be it. All too often in the past, the City has been willing to waive limitations on parking to accommodate a particular project, despite the APFO. This never should happen. The APFO is there for a reason—to protect the citizens against the consequences of excessive development.

Further, residential development must take into account the capacity of the schools. Building retirement communities is fine, but other kinds of residential development should be approved only if and when the developer can show that there will be no (further) overcrowding of the local schools. Otherwise, the developer should be required to pay for the additional classrooms needed. Otherwise, the children suffer in overcrowded classes and the taxpayers suffer to pay the costs of additional schools.

Frederick J. Graboske

101 N. Van Buren St.

Rockville

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

Jeffrey W. Hudgens
Doris M. Schraft

207 Upton Street
Rockville, MD 20850-1839

Tel: 301-975-2512 (w)
Tel: 301-279-7524 (h)
Cell: 301-335-5741
Fax: 301-279-7524
E-mail: jwhudgens@att.net
E-mail: d.schraft@att.net

March 16, 2011

Dear Rockville Planning Commission, Mayor of Rockville and the City Council of Rockville,

It has come to our attention that the Council is taking a stealth approach to gutting the City's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) and Adequate Public Facilities Standards (APFS) through the draft Rockville Pike Plan. We ask the City Council to reject this reprehensible attempt to further the interests of developers over the Rockville public's interests with regard to maintaining quality schools, adequate emergency services, roadways, water, and sewers.

It is an established fact that school quality is the most important factor that prevents the decline of property values during recessions. Any lowering of APFS and APFO standards will be accompanied by a future decline in residential property values and the tax base. Such a decline is against the interests of the city residents. Furthermore, it is against the interests of our country because students will not obtain the training they need to compete and succeed.

Finally, some inviolate principals apply here:

- Our laws should be about sound public policy; they should not be changed to accommodate individual pet projects or developers who are not working in accord with the Rockville residents' interests.
- The interests of each Councilman's constituency are the first priority; in October 2010 the community spoke loudly and emphatically on the importance of preserving and enforcing the APFS and APFO. Why is the Council now considering a plan that countermands the previously stated public opinion?
- School overcrowding must be curbed; the City Council should be engaged in searching for solutions, not in adding to this problem. Likewise, traffic overload must be reduced, and the City Council should seek solutions—not an official lowering of traffic standards.
- We reject the proposal by the Rockville Pike Plan to create a new development czar (the "Town Architect") who would unilaterally approve new development in the Rockville Pike area with no involvement by the Planning Commission and no citizen input. We demand citizen input for each development step, which will include publication of the full plan (no abstracts) at least 30 days before the public meeting where comments are presented.

In our 26-year residency in Rockville, we have voted in every election. Although our son has long since graduated from Richard Montgomery High School, we still vote to assure quality schooling and quality public services in our community. The present stealth attack on APFS and APFO is poor law, and its motivations are—at best—misguided. Today's council vote will directly influence our votes for city council members in the next election.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey W. Hudgens

Doris M. Schraft



Montgomery County Group

Dear Planning Commission,

The Montgomery County Sierra Club strongly endorses the Rockville's Pike initiative, which matches our goal of creating multi-modal transportation that gets people out of cars and into walkable neighborhoods boasting a variety of uses. We endorse many elements of the plan, in particular the proposals to break up super blocks, move storefronts forward, enclose parking lots, widen sidewalks, and add trees and other vegetation to the landscape.

We do, however, have some suggestions, as follows:

1. While the current plan emphasizes retail, we would like to see more residential development, particularly apartment buildings. It might appear that residential development would increase the amount of automobile trips, but we believe the reverse to be true. The I270 corridor is already jobs rich. (Indeed, because the corridor is overbuilt, we see little reason to add jobs or retail, although we hope the existing retail can be preserved.) More apartment buildings, therefore, would allow people to live much closer to work and retail, greatly shortening current commutes from the east county and Prince George's. New apartments could be clustered around transit, adding residential and retail development without compromising the character of the existing communities or pushing out long-time business.

Residential development would also provide a ready supply of customers for retail, many of whom could walk or bike. Furthermore, apartment buildings provide extremely energy efficient housing, as heating and air conditioning are shared. New buildings could take advantage of the latest technology, to be even more energy efficient. Of course, more school capacity would be needed to make these new residences viable. Adding residential units would also increase the use of walking, biking, and transit. This may be an extremely ambitious undertaking, but in the long run we believe it would be worth it.

2. Regarding transit, it is imperative that Rockville's Pike coordinate with the White Flint Sector Plan and with county plans for a BRT system, both of which employ the center lane as a median. The county plan will likely include a 355 route running from Bethesda to Germantown (or beyond). It's questionable whether the Rockville's Pike plan to use access roads is viable in isolation, although it might work for local buses. BRT, like other transit, works best as a network, and the Rockville's Pike plan needs to account for this.

The current plan also envisions bicycles sharing lanes with buses. While this is viable, the best bike paths are separated from other traffic. It's also crucial that bicycle paths be

clearly connected to other bicycle paths, and to town centers, in an obvious network. Currently, Rockville and North Bethesda have some excellent bicycle assets—the Trolley Trail, the I270 crossing at MD28, the Carl Henn Millenium Trail—but they are fragmented and disconnected. Better signage would help (preferably bilingual), but full connectivity would be even better. The idea is to transform bicycling from a maverick activity to one enjoyed by a variety of residents, as has already occurred on the Georgetown Branch Trail.

3. Finally, while we commend the plan's commitment to pedestrian comfort and safety, we believe even more could be done. This is particularly true when it comes to crossing the Pike. Wider medians with crosswalk buttons would be one way to allow slow moving pedestrians (for instance those in wheelchairs) to cross without getting stranded. Crosswalks in the middle of long blocks would be another alternative.

Technical solutions alone may not be enough. Rockville currently has an automobile culture that is extremely unfriendly to pedestrians; turning vehicles often will cut off pedestrians who have right-of-way. An education campaign targeted at drivers might be one way of alleviating this. Aggressive ticketing of cars that cut off pedestrians would be another. Given that pedestrians are particularly vulnerable while drivers are protected, it's worth putting pedestrian rights on a particularly high plane. Indeed, it is worth doing this immediately to begin to build a culture of pedestrian comfort.

Notwithstanding our suggestions, we commend and support the Rockville's Pike plan, which we believe to be visionary, long-term, sustainable thinking. We look forward to working with you to make the plan even more visionary and sustainable.

Thank you very much for all of your efforts.

Sincerely,

Ethan Goffman
Transit Chair
Sierra Club, Montgomery County Group

Rockville Planning Commission Meeting March 16, 2011-- Citizen Comments For Rockville Pike Plan

Agenda Item

Sean Hart

to:

rockvillepikeplan, Phyllis Marcuccio \(\Rockville Mayor\), Bridget Newton \(\Rockville City Council\), Piotr Gajewski \(\Rockville City Council\), John Britton \(\Rockville City Council\), Mark Pierzchala \(\Rockville City Council\)

03/16/2011 04:43 PM

Show Details

To The Rockville Planning Commission, Mayor and Council:

I am providing my comments as a private citizen regarding the Rockville Pike Plan (the Plan) proposal that is scheduled for discussion at the March 16, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting. It is my understanding that the Plan proposes to severely reduce or eliminate the applicability and tests provided for in the City of Rockville's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) and Adequate Public Facilities Standards (APFS). As the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council are aware the APFO/APFS were put in place to provide a reasonable structure for the City to manage our growth in the most responsible manner possible. Any proposals to reduce, eliminate or exempt any development project outside of the process provided for in the APFO/APFS is directly counter to the intent and objectives for which the APFO/APFS was enacted. (This recently occurred with the Council's decision to give in to the threats from MCPS and exempt the placement of portable classrooms at our already overcrowded schools from the APFS.)

The proposals contained in the Rockville Pike Plan to bypass the APFO/APFS are a direct affront to the citizenry of Rockville. By effectively eliminating the APFO/APFS from the Rockville Pike Plan implementation, they fundamentally say to each and every one of us that an initiative that is as important to the future of Rockville as the Rockville Pike Plan should not be implemented in the best manner possible to meet the needs of all Rockville residents. If the Planning Commission - and ultimately Mayor and Council - agree to this proposal to bypass the APFO/APFS for the Rockville Pike Plan then - sadly - you will have confirmed that the government of Rockville simply has no regard for the due processes that have been established for the benefit of the City of Rockville as a whole.

I strongly urge all of you - as representatives who have been elected, appointed or hired to act in the best interests of Rockville and its citizens - to make the changes necessary to the Rockville Pike Plan to ensure that the APFO/APFS and similar standards are fairly applied through due process to the Rockville Pike Plan as well as other future development initiatives within the City.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,
Sean Hart
8 Bentana Ct.
Rockville, MD 20850

Sue Seboda-See transcript from 3/16/2011 oral testimony.